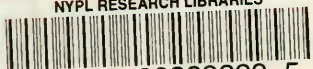


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THE
Golden Wedding:

JOSEPH TAYLOR,

REBECCA W. TAYLOR,

OCTOBER 15, 1868.

PRIVATELY PRINTED.



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JOSEPH TAYLOR.

Born September 8, 1795.

REBECCA WAY TAYLOR.

Born October 13, 1799.

CEDARCROFT.

THE GOLDEN WEDDING.

THE GOLDEN WEDDING.

A MASQUE,

Performed at Cedarcroft, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

October 15, 1858.

AFTER the relatives and friends of the Golden Bride and Bridegroom, nearly two hundred in number, had assembled, Bayard Taylor thus addressed them:

Dear Friends and Members of our Family:—

It may well be expected that an occasion so rare and memorable as that which we are met to commemorate to-day, should not be allowed to pass without some more special celebration than the simple coming together

of family and friends to greet the Golden Bridegroom and Bride. The instances where a wedded pair live to see the fiftieth anniversary of their nuptials are not only far apart, but on this occasion they are made more remarkable by the fact that this is *the third generation*, in a direct line, which has known such an anniversary.

My grandfather and grandmother, John and Anna Taylor, were married in 1792, and died in 1850, having lived fifty-eight years together. My great-grandfather and great-grandmother, Abraham and Rebecca Taylor, were married in 1758, and the former died in 1808, soon after completing fifty years of wedded life. Moreover, the elder brother of my father, and his wife, John and Margaret Taylor, both of whom are still living, have been married fifty-four years; and I may add, as an interesting coincidence, that the great-uncle of my wife—the Geheimrath Wilhelm von Braun—and his wife, celebrated their Golden Wedding on the 24th of May of this year, in Gotha, Germany.

I am sure that the thoughts suggested by a Golden Wedding must be already stirring in your minds. It is

meet that much should be said, were it only that which has been often said before; but I am the one least fitted, through my relation to the golden couple, to say it to-day. You must expect no more from me than a hearty welcome to each and all, with my thanks, and the thanks of my parents, wife, brothers, and sisters, that you have come together to keep fresh the ties of family and of old friendship. On such days as these, however, we have other help. The invisible Spirits that keep familiar watch over men,—the Virtues which both lead and follow, and bless them,—the Spirits of the Lands through which the family is scattered,—become visible to mortal eyes and give report of the fifty years that have gone by. I have heard a whisper—no matter how or whence—that these Spirits will come to us to-day, and I know that they will keep their word. So I summon them from the sky, and the air, and the earth! Come, Fairy of Domestic Life, thou who watchest over hearths, and homes, and family ties! Come, Virtues that accompany us, exacting hard service at first, but blessing us in the end! Come, Spirits of Lands and of Countries, that

divide families only to bind them more firmly,—that seem to separate us, yet teach that God is equally everywhere, and will bring us all to His peace at last! Come! Appear!

ENTER

THE MASQUE.

CHARACTERS.

THE FAIRY OF DOMESTIC LIFE	<i>Miss S. P. Chambers.</i>
TWO ATTENDANT FAIRIES.	(<i>Lilian Taylor.</i>
	(<i>Percy H. Taylor.</i>
TRUTH	<i>Miss Annie E. Gause.</i>
CHARITY	<i>Miss S. Stubbs.</i>
TEMPERANCE	<i>Miss Sue Taylor.</i>
AMERICA	<i>Miss Ellen Taylor.</i>
AFRICA	<i>Miss Susan Goodwin.</i>
SWITZERLAND	<i>Miss Helen Marshall.</i>
GERMANY	<i>Mrs. Eva G. White.</i>

THE FAIRY OF DOMESTIC LIFE.

From Fairy-land I've found my way,
And greet you all, good friends, to-day.
Since Heaven has ordered in its plan
That many spirits work for man.

It gave to me the will and power—
Beginning with the marriage-hour—
To watch the new-made home, and guard
The growing household afterward;
To keep the hearth-fire warm and clear;
To make more peaceful and more dear
The pure domestic atmosphere,
That, howsoe'er the children roam,
They shall not lose the love of home.

The Fairy of Domestic Life

Greets you, the husband,—you, the wife,—
Who, fifty years, have hand in hand
Kept warm your homestead in the land:
And for the trials you endured,
And for the blessings you secured,
And for the faithful love, whose flame
Made sorrow lighter when it came,
And for the virtues whose increase
Make now this day a day of peace,—

I hail and bless you, and I bring
The golden wreath and golden ring!

Come forward, children: crown the bride,
And deck the bridegroom at her side!

[Goes forward, with the two attendant fairies.]

THE BOY (*to the Bride*).

Accept and wear the ring, I pray;
And let us crown you for the day!

*[The Fairy puts upon the Bride's head
a crown of golden myrtle, and a ring
on her finger.]*

THE GIRL (*to the Bridegroom*).

Accept the bridegroom's golden ring,
And wear the golden wreath I bring!

*[The Fairy puts on the ring, and
attaches the wreath.]*

THE FAIRY.

And now, the day to celebrate,
A host of grateful spirits wait.
The nymphs of virtues and of lands,
They all appear at my commands :
They all obey the golden spell,
And are to-day made visible.
The Virtues that have followed you
Must first come forth, in order due,
Acknowledging the merit won
By will to serve, and service done.
Your guide in age, as first in youth,
I summon forth : her name is Truth !

TRUTH.

*[Comes forward, with a wreath of
amaranth in her hand.]*

I greet you, who have watched your ways
In troubled as in prosperous days ;

And in the lapse of fifty years
No single act or word appears
That is not honest, clear, and true.
None ever were misled by you:
Your path was open to the light;
Your skirts are clear, your souls are white:
Your honor in the land shall be
A sign and evidence of me.
I give the garland that endures:
My crown of amaranth is yours.

[Lays down the wreath, and retires.]

THE FAIRY.

Chief Spirit of the Holy Three,
Come thou and greet them, Charity!

CHARITY.

[With a wreath of cedar in her hand.]

By giving, man takes hold on Heaven.
I measure not how much is given:

The smallest is the greatest part,
When with it goes the generous heart.
The wish, alone, is counted good:
You gave and helped whenc'er you could,
And I, who watch o'er all distress,
The measure of your will can guess.
I will not praise in studied words:
The tree that feeds the winter birds
Must give the wreath that tells of me;
And green as is that kindly tree,
In loving hearts your memory be!

[Lays down the wreath, and retires.]

THE FAIRY.

Thou, with pure brow and steady glance,
Come forth, the nymph of Temperance!

TEMPERANCE.

[With a goblet of water in her hand.]

Within my crystal flood behold
The charm that brought this day of gold!

The peace that comes of self-control,
Untroubled brain and quiet soul,
Attended you in every stage,
And give you, now, a green old age.
Not in the tide that brings excess,
But in the fount whose waters bless,
I drink to you, whose lives have shown
The strength that comes from me alone!

[Drinks of the water, and retires.]

THE FAIRY.

Come, and among thy people stand,
Thou Goddess of our Native Land!

AMERICA.

[With a wreath of laurel in her hand.]

With head and hand, with heart and breath,
You helped me in the days of death.
You heard my call among the first,
You kept your courage at the worst,

And when my final triumph rang,
You shared the joy, and hid the pang.
With hearts your faith to me made brave,
You stood beside your hero's grave,
Nor grudged the sacrifice you gave.
No laurel's green enough to crown
Your lives and his with fit renown ;
But take this garland as a sign
Of grief and glory, blent with mine,
And think, that, with her tried and true,
Your country thanks and blesses you !

[Lays down the wreath, and retires.]

THE FAIRY.

Come, with new hope upon thy face,—
Come, Africa: speak for thy race !

AFRICA.

[*With a wreath of ferns and tropical flowers*

I speak my people's gratitude,
For thirty years by me you stood,
When every word that helped my race
Brought scorn, or pity, or disgrace.
O long ago, among the few
Who plead my cause, I counted you:
Through years of gloom you led the way
To this young dawn of Freedom's day,
When, all your hopes fulfilled, I stand
And lift to heaven my chainless hand.
So take my garland with the rest;
The grateful thanks of the oppressed
Go with its leaves, and make you blest!

[*Lays down the wreath, and retires.*

THE FAIRY.

I call a stranger to our band;
Come forth and greet them, Switzerland!

SWITZERLAND.

[*With a wreath of life-everlasting,
representing the "edelweiss" of the
Alps.*

I come from lake and mountain old
To hail this wedding-day of gold ;
And, stranger though I be, demand
The right among your ranks to stand.
I sent my son across the wave,
And you to him the daughter gave
Whom now I keep, and call her mine,
Among my sunny hills of vine,
A precious gift it was—and so
This hoary garland I bestow,
Made of the flower that highest grows
Beneath my fields of Alpine snows.
It gives content and household peace ;
And may its magic never cease !

[*Lays down the wreath, and retires.*

THE FAIRY.

Another, from beyond the sea ;
I bid thee welcome, Germany !

GERMANY.

[*With a wreath of oak-leaves.*

Children of mine, though wandered far
To dwell beneath the western star,
Yet still my blood is in your veins,—
Mine ancient life with you remains.
The links between our lands, through you
Are closer drawn, and bound anew,
And German hearts are with you here,
Making the ties of blood more dear.
Let this, my garland, for you be
The type of strength and honesty,—
By sun unscorched, by storm unbroke :
Your age be sturdy, like the oak !

[*She lays down the wreath.*

(*All the characters, who had retired a few paces, now form a circle, and unite in singing the Song.*)

SONG.

Gather the garlands of autumn now,
 Meet for the marriage-day,
And the golden leaves on the faithful brow
 Shall cover the tresses gray.
For the blossoms of promise, that long ago
 Were twined for their nuptial dawn,
Crowns of fulfillment we now bestow,—
 Crowns for the summers gone!

Time, that has left them so much of youth,
 The blessing of age shall leave,
Of joy in life, and the love and truth
 They gave, and they now receive.
Past is the sorrow, and shared the pain;
 Shed is the measure of tears;
But peace and contentment and love remain
 To brighten their golden years!

POEMS
FOR THE
GOLDEN WEDDING.

THE FIRST GREETING.

READ BY THE AUTHOR.

THEN when their early gold the leaves
Put on, and through October's sheaves
 The warm winds rustling blew—
Two paths, which till that time had run
Apart, though near, were thenceforth one,
 And one, till death—the Two,
Who, led by love, from neighbor lands,
Did walk therein with wedded hands.

Past what fair bowers and fairy streams,
What sweeter world of secret dreams,
 And through what glooms unknown,

Their pathway winds, I can but guess,
But, surely, through much happiness,
 For they are not alone ;
But, dearer grown, each other see,
Or at the breast, or on the knee !

The house which God with children fills,
Like this, is blest, whatever ills
 Its doors may darken after :
How sweet to watch them day by day,
To wipe their little tears away,
 And hear their endless laughter !
And nearer heaven than aught on earth
A merry brood about the hearth !

Yours, good and fair, ye good old pair,
Are grown, and scattered here and there,
 With children of their own ;
Yet, once more gathered as of old,
Their happy faces you behold,
 And are no more alone ;

And, as your lips are pressed to theirs,
Gone are your griefs and your gray hairs!

The smiles and tears of fifty years
Have passed away—Age disappears:

 You're in your May of life,
And, comelier than your children now,
Repeat to-day the holy vow

 That made ye Man and Wife!
Sound! and, the bridal measure treading,
We older folk will keep your Golden Wedding.

R. H. STODDARD.

THE SECOND GREETING.

READ BY THE AUTHOR.

Look back across your fifty years,
And be again the man, the maid,
Upon whose youthful hopes and fears
God's sweetest sacrament was laid.

Bridge Time's swift river with a span
Whose arch shall hide his waves from sight :
Glide back to where your lives began ;
Let past and present reunite.

Be this that far October day
Which distance only lifts the higher—
A day with clouds of smoky gray
Rolling above the hills of fire.

Be this that quickly-falling night
Which caught you almost unaware—
Your marriage-eve; and lo! how bright
Shines every star that glittered there!

Make each of us a wedding-guest,
A friend amid the throng you knew,
Whose lips pronounced your nuptials blest,
Whose eyes were filled with tender dew.

Why think, O Bride, of how the hours
Have stored your memory as they rolled.
Or why your wreath of orange-flowers
Time's alchemy has turned to gold?

Why, Bridegroom, look from face to face,
As though you knew them, and could name
Your children—women fair with grace,
And ripened men of worth and fame!

Why look you both for one who lies
In glory, but so far apart?

His laureled memory dims your eyes ;
You can but see him with the heart,

Think them not yours ; but each a guest
Or kinsman, and ourselves your peers,
Who differ from you, like the rest
Of mortals, but in looks and years.

We will it thus. With Fancy's wand
We sever and rejoin your chain
By this one golden link—a bond
Whose touch shall make you young again.

Men see the fruit within the flower,
We see the flower within the fruit ;
About the ripening sun and shower
Our willful lips to-night are mute.

The music calls, the dance is set,
The feast is spread within the hall :
Bridegroom and Bride, a while forget
A little, to remember all !

GEORGE H. BOKER.

JUL 17 1950

